

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2011 2:38 PM
To: H
Subject: From Anne

We sent in a cable and a couple of sitreps. Let me first say that while the Embassy was on a reduced schedule today, we were moving around the city and carrying out routine business (saying goodbye to the Israeli ambassador at his suburban home, going to the Foreign Ministry, etc.)

General observations:

- 1) The events in the square are sure to throw in doubt security for the elections and are likely to suppress turnout.
- 2) The demonstrations seem largely leaderless. Last night's encounters were aggravated by the appearance of "ultras" who are disaffected soccer thugs with longstanding grievances against the police.
- 3) The political parties are keeping their distance from these demonstrations, condemning police excesses but not embracing the protests. They suspect these demonstrations do not have public support.
- 4) The government has announced that elections will be held on time. The Muslim Brotherhood issued a statement demanding that elections should go ahead. We have nothing elsewhere to indicate that the government is thinking of postponing elections.
- 5) We are not exactly sure about the status of the negotiations on the "principles." They are still negotiating but the process has probably been eclipsed by events in the square.
- 6) To state the obvious, the situation is volatile and could be immediately inflamed again by some random (or planned) event. If the Muslim Brotherhood decides to join, the situation would become far more difficult. (The Muslim Brotherhood went home Friday night, after a peaceful demonstration.)

I have a meeting with a couple of SCAF generals tomorrow.

It will be important to keep the focus on the elections.